

The guide's entry for the same collection reads:

4 inches. 1857-1877

Consists of letterbooks of J.H. Mason, Toronto Agent for the company.

In every case checked, the *Union List* entry is more informative (if often less detailed in terms of archival organization) than the guide entry.

The guide also imposes, imperfectly, an alphabetic listing of its private manuscripts. Several collections are out of alphabetical order, and this slip makes it difficult to find them without recourse to the index published at the back of volume 2. To take only two of several examples, entry 0434, which describes the Johns C. Steele Diaries, is incomprehensibly lodged between the Lyman Barclay Papers and the Alexander Barnet Family Papers; the records of Planned Parenthood Ontario are carelessly inserted between the Hinman Family and Lt. Col. Thomas Hodgetts Papers. This problem is partially solved by the index, but its reliability and completeness are open to question for there is no consistency in what is included. In many cases, papers relating to institutions located in personal collections were not indexed: the researcher will never know, except through serendipitous meandering, that the Harriston Collection contains the corporate records of McCreedy's General Store, that the Charles H. Heels Collection deals with Canadian National Railways material (though one can find this out through the index entry under railroads), or that the H.D. Morgan Collection relates to the local history of Brockville and Leeds County (even though there is an index entry for both).

The consistency in setting up individual entries and the overall proofreading is less than perfect. One of the advantages of using a word processor is the ease with which a uniform format can be adopted and the quickness with which typographical errors can be corrected. Inconsistencies in format and inadequate proofreading are invariably irritating, and sometimes interfere with the usefulness of the entries themselves. Finally, one must regret, even if one understands the bizarre ways of publishing, that a guide of enduring usefulness is produced in this manner when other, arguably less important, publications of the ministry are given far better treatment. The spiral-bound volumes are cheaply produced and unlikely to stand up to intensive use, while microfiche is an unhappy format unlikely to be referred to by many researchers.

The editors provide three justifications for the guide's production: to assist staff of the Archives of Ontario by providing a central reference source for its collection; to inform government ministries of the holdings of the archives; and to assist researchers (particularly those distant from Toronto) in identifying archival holdings which would be of potential interest. With all of its problems, the guide will be an effective, if sometimes difficult, tool for any of the three target groups.

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Catalogue of the CBC Television Drama Collection. YORK UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES. Downsview, Ontario: York University Libraries Publications, 1985. 4 microfiche. \$20.00.

The collection described in this catalogue consists of over five thousand Canadian Broadcasting Corporation files deposited in the York University Archives. They contain

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scripts, production-financial documents, reviews, readers' reports, and correspondence relating to television drama programmes produced and aired by the CBC between 1952 (the beginning of CBC television) and 1977. While it is not the purpose of this review to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the collection itself, a catalogue can only be as valuable as the material it describes, and in this case the collection content is well worth the effort of an effective index. It should be pointed out, however, that York's collection is not a definitive one in terms of CBC drama produced during this period. Notable gaps include the highly successful series "A Gift to Last;" there are also only representative samples of such prolific series as "The Beachcombers" and "Cariboo Country."

The slim package of four microfiche which provide access to York's CBC Television Drama Collection is impressively compact. Published without any accompanying document, except for a brief press release, the colour-coded microfiche appear at first glance to be self-explanatory. Arranged alphabetically by author and title, and numerically by CBC file number, the catalogue provides neat cross-references between these three indexes. The brief entries (duplicated in each index) contain a number of references such as dates, production credits, and the type of documentation contained in the file. However, with no user's guide to supplement and explain the information provided, the catalogue is seriously hampered as a comprehensive guide to the collection, and therefore has only limited value to the serious researcher of television drama.

Among the surprises in store for the unwary user is the fact that the author index includes as well the names of the adaptor, translator, director, producer, composer, and designer! Here again, a short user's guide could have drawn attention to the arrangement of the file index which, apart from providing a numerical index to the CBC files, lists the various personal names accessible through the author index. Something else not immediately evident is that the title index includes series as well as the titles of individual plays. No doubt there are less readily observable niceties to the arrangement of the catalogue which a user's guide would have highlighted. This would have enhanced the catalogue's overall effectiveness as a research tool.

From a researcher's point of view, however, the catalogue's main drawback is not its arrangement, or the absence of explanation concerning it, but the quality of the entries themselves. Information not included in the catalogue, but which is of paramount interest to the researcher, includes the existence and location of the actual drama tapes or films, whether the scripts in the files are those actually used in the television production (revisions can and do occur right up to and during the filming), and synopses of plots and descriptions of series.

Compared with Howard Fink's descriptive bibliography of Concordia University's CBC Radio Drama Collection (reviewed in *Archivaria* 20), York's catalogue neither provides as broad an overview of CBC television drama nor as scholarly an approach to the subject. Nevertheless, for all its limitations, this catalogue and the collection it describes are of considerable value to the research community. By giving this material space and funds to provide access to it, York University has recognized the archival significance of the television medium and of the performing arts in the documentation of our social history.

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